

Coffman Wants Aid to Pakistan Slashed ***Pakistani Cooperation Poor Despite U.S. Aid***

(WASHINGTON) - U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman, R-CO, introduced legislation today to end all U.S. economic aid to Pakistan and to suspend all U.S. military aid until the Obama administration can certify to Congress that the government of Pakistan is effectively using the aid against the Taliban and other al Qaeda affiliates that are planning and executing attacks on U.S. targets.

“My legislation will send a clear signal to the government of Pakistan that they can’t have it both ways. They can’t be stridently anti-American and expect U.S. economic aid to continue and they can’t be complicit in supporting some of the same radical Islamists groups that target Americans and expect to receive more U.S. military aid,” Coffman said.

Coffman is a member of the House Armed Services Committee where he read reports that indicate a growing pattern of incidents that indicate elements within the Pakistani government are blocking cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan and are providing covert support to some of the same organizations that are targeting U.S. troops and their coalition allies fighting in Afghanistan.

Coffman also referred to recent congressional testimony given by the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, where he accused Pakistan’s intelligence agency of providing strategic support for the Haqqani network, which the U.S. blames for the recent attack on the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan. In his testimony, Admiral Mullen said, “The support of terrorism is part of their national strategy...and that’s got to fundamentally shift.”

Coffman’s legislation would immediately suspend all military aid to Pakistan until the Obama Administration can certify that the government of Pakistan is fully cooperating with the U.S. and is effectively using U.S. military aid in conducting operations against the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other radical Islamic organizations engaged in terrorist operations.

Coffman said he does not think that legislation recently passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee to make all U.S. aid to Pakistan subject to conditions of cooperation against the

Haqqani network and the other terror groups associated with al Qaeda goes far enough. Coffman said he believes that U.S. economic aid Pakistan receives is a “complete waste of U.S. tax dollars” because it hasn’t done anything to improve the U.S.-Pakistani relationship as intended. Coffman argued that the relationship has actually deteriorated over the last two years, despite the fact that Pakistan has received over \$2 billion in economic aid in the last two years alone.

“By cutting off all economic aid and suspending all military aid we will be sending a clear message to the Pakistani government that they should not take our support for granted,” Coffman said.

Coffman, a Marine Corps combat veteran of the first Gulf War and the Iraq War, argued that so long as we have troops fighting in Afghanistan who need the supply lines that run through Pakistan, it would be irresponsible to immediately eliminate all military aid to Pakistan. Coffman said he also believes that the Pakistani military is capable of effectively using the aid to help defeat some of the same radical Islamic forces that U.S. troops are fighting who cross from Pakistan to the Afghan side of the border.

“Unfortunately, so long as we have troops fighting on the ground in Afghanistan we will have to maintain a military-to-military relationship with Pakistan at some level,” Coffman said.

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